



Christ Church Cathedral School

Friday 3rd December 2021

Dear Parents,

On Thursday morning a group of young men and women called the Oxford Gargoyles visited us. Gargoyles, of course, are the often hideous faces which are carved onto buildings to cover the spouts which eject water from the rooves when it rains. One of the particular pleasures of Oxford is that, as you look up at many of the old buildings, you will see faces smiling down at you from all directions, faces lovingly carved by masons living many years ago. There is no end to the number in this city. Mostly they were made in mediaeval times. They come in the shape of weird and wonderful animals. Humans, scholars, peasants and kings – but you can also see some much more modern faces – there is one, for instance, in Pembroke College – of individuals who have lived recently. At any rate our Gargoyles were very much alive. In fact, they had come to sing to us. The Oxford Gargoyles are an a cappella group, who sing unaccompanied jazz. They use their voices to imitate instruments, and the warmth and depth of sound is extraordinary. It was a delight to see and hear them performing with such skill and pleasure, and the way in which they all worked together. Mr Inns, who did some gap student duties for us at the beginning of this term, was exquisite. Such a choir is a model for life – a group of individuals working together to perform something way beyond the sum of its parts.


Indeed, it has been a week of performances and on Wednesday evening we performed our first Informal Christmas Concert for two years – in fact the previous one must have been the Christmas Concert in 2019. It was a real treat. The ten boys who are aiming for music scholarships at senior schools this year – really an extraordinary number – performed for us. They played with great panache and skill, all in their different ways, and, as ever, it struck me so forcefully how in the very best performances, the personality of the instrumentalists comes through, endowing the performances with real colour and life. One cannot help but feel that if boys are already able to perform in this way at their age, they have such a head start in terms of what they will have the confidence to do in life generally, not to mention in the musical sphere.

And then there was the French Play – one of the highlights of our Craft Day, which we enjoyed so much. The play was *Cinderella* or *Cendrillon* as we learnt to call it! There was so much colour and confidence, and it was extremely gratifying to hear so many of the boys speaking French so fluently. The play has just six parts and there were 18 boys performing so we were treated to a troupe of Cendrillons and hordes of ugly sisters. The effect was appropriately overwhelming! We had a succession of ugly sisters dressed in garishly coloured wigs and the poor prince was particularly hard-pressed to identify his beloved, with whom he was to exit the ball at midnight. But sure enough, the abandoned trainer did fit the appropriate Cendrillon and the ugly sisters were forced to shriek in French dismay, as Cendrillon ended up with Prince Charming! Bravo les enfants.

It was miserable weather on Brewer Street on Friday morning. It was raining, cold and grey. Fortunately, one of the boys arrived seemingly unperturbed by the somewhat depressing conditions. “How are you?” I asked, hopefully. “Lively!” he responded, beaming. I decided that this would be my motto for the day. How splendid then that we were treated to a lively rendition of Jeremiah Clarke’s ‘Trumpet Voluntary’ played by a number of brass players in the Cathedral, the ancient arches echoing to the tones. This was followed by a gloriously colourful piece of jazz. With so many performances, how easy it is to feel “lively” at CCCS.

Mr Murray
Headmaster

Michaelmas 2021
Monday 6th - Sunday 12th December

MONDAY 6	
9.30	Pre-Prep Nativity dress rehearsal
3.30 - 4.30	After School Chess Club (Forms 3 & 4)
4.00 - 5.00	After School Football Club, Pre-Prep (WWH)
4.45 - 5.45	After School Chess Club (Forms 5 - 8)
TUESDAY 7	
	Music Exams - all day
1.35	NCS Football U8 & U9 (away) 2.30 start. Leaving on foot at 1.35 pm. Spectators welcome
4.00 - 5.00	After School Tennis Club, Pre-Prep (WWH)
WEDNESDAY 8	
2.00	Pre-Prep Nativity Play (Parking will be available on the Broad Walk)
1.20	U13 v NCS Football (away) 2.30 start. Leaving on foot at 1.20 pm. Spectators welcome
1.20	U11 v NCS Football (away) 1.40 start. Leaving on foot at 1.20 pm. Spectators welcome
3.30 - 4.30	After School Chess Club (Form 2)
THURSDAY 9	
5.15	Hook Norton Carol Concert
FRIDAY 10	
	Christmas Jumper Day - £2 (proceeds split between three charities - Pavilion, CCCSPA, AIPFF)
8.30	Cathedral Assembly, speaker the Chaplain
11.30	Christmas Lunch, Pre-Prep (WWH)
12.30	Christmas Lunch, Prep (Dining Room in bubbles)
	CC: IN
SATURDAY 11	
10.30	Carol Service (Parking will be available on the Broad Walk) End of Term (return 06.01.22) followed by CCCSPA Punch Party (11.30 am approx.) CC: Home after Punch Party
SUNDAY 12	
	CC: Home

Holiday Camps

Unfortunately, due to lack of numbers, our Christmas Holiday Camp will not be running this year. PD



Cathedral Notice

If you are in Oxford over Christmas you are very welcome to come to the Cathedral for Christmas services. Pre-Preps and younger Prep boys should particularly enjoy the Journey to Bethlehem at 10.30 am on Christmas Eve morning - bring a lamb, or a cuddly toy of your choice!

There is no need for tickets to the Journey to Bethlehem, but some of our other services will need (free!) tickets so that we can control numbers; check here for details <https://www.chch.ox.ac.uk/Christmas2021>

Tickets are available from Monday 6th December.



Charity Carol Service

Last Tuesday, our Cathedral Choristers performed at the Christ Church Cathedral Carol Service in aid of Sarcoma.

Over £125,000 was raised, with guest readers Alexander Armstrong, Bear Grylls and Kate Winslet then a performance by a bespoke gospel choir.

It was a very special evening. LC

Brass Group and Jazz Ensemble at Cathedral Assembly

It was excellent to see our senior wind players taking to the stage on Friday morning, with two energetic performances in Assembly.

The Brass Group ('Trumpet Voluntary' by Jeremiah Clarke) and Jazz Ensemble ('Blue Monk', by Thelonius Monk) reminded us how wonderful it is to hear large groups in the Cathedral again - especially when there are now two tubas in school!



Very many thanks to Mr Somerville for his hard work with the ensembles. SB



Informal Christmas Concert

Huge congratulations to the performers in Wednesday's Informal Christmas Concert, which was held in school and featured the String Quartet, String Orchestra and Lower Strings Ensemble. Additionally, ten Form 8 soloists presented pieces intended for their Music award auditions next term, and it was a delight to hear such varied and stylish performances. A special thank you goes to Mr and Mrs Wilson for preparing their ensembles to perform so confidently.

If you missed out on the live event, you can hear the Walton Hall erupting into 'Jingle Bells' on our video below! SB

<https://youtu.be/a90Ero5u5Wc>





Nursery and Pre-Prep Christmas Post Box

Pre-Prep and Nursery children can post their Christmas cards to each other from Monday 29th November.

Delivery of the cards will be on Thursday 9th December.

Please address each Christmas card with the recipient's first name, surname, and the name of their class.

Thank you. RF



Return to the Desert Island



What a delight it was to gather in Wolsey on Monday evening with members of the English Department and a dozen boys to revel in our rich history of English literature. On a calm evening, the island's aerial was attached to the top of the tallest palm tree and we were thus also able to include Henry and Ivan, transmitting from their respective hideaways beyond our horizon. Not only that, but making his way elegantly to our shore was returning migratory pupil and literary ocean-dweller, Heinrich!

There were – as ever – too many contributions for me to name and describe them all, but what a joy to hear the words of Douglas Adams, Daphne du Maurier, PG Wodehouse (funny how many great writers have those initials!) Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Arthur Ransome and many, many more. There were boys from youngest – very well done, Hugo! – to oldest, each speaking out loud the passion which draws them, which draws us, through those magical doors of imagination which open when we have in our hands a good book.

Just try saying it over and over as the waves lap on the shore: “Last night I dreamt I went to Manderley again” and again... and again... and again... PW

A Concert from the Boys of Christ Church Cathedral Choir

Saturday 4th December 2.30 pm - 4.00 pm

Every age group from babies upwards is warmly welcomed to this fun and informal day-time concert of Christmas music. Expect angelic singing from the choristers, thunderous music from the organ and plenty of well-known carols for the audience to sing. The proceeds of this concert support Christ Church Cathedral Music Trust.

To book tickets, please visit:

https://musicoxford.ticketsolve.com/shows/873628708?_ga=2.227925722.69721096.1637930637-1771656169.1637930637



Thursday 9th December 7.00 pm at St Peter's Church, Hook Norton



CCCS choristers are delighted to support Angus Irvine Playing Fields Fund

(AIPFF), a small charity supporting green playing fields and sites in deprived

inner city areas #jointeamshotgangs.

More information on: <https://www.accesssport.org.uk/Pages/Category/angus-irvine-playing-fields-fund>

Please buy tickets here: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/carol-service-tickets-163160010985?aff=ebdsoporgprofile>



Nursery News

December began in full festive spirit with a Christmas Concert in the Nursery.

The children dressed as snowmen and alongside Mary and baby Jesus, they performed several seasonal songs to a full audience.

Thank you to all our parents who joined us for coffee and mince pies and to watch our concert. NE



Trinity Music Exams

This term's Trinity Music Exams will be on Tuesday 7th December. If your son is taking an exam, please ask him to check the timetable which will be outside the WWH. SB



French News

Who knew that Cendrillon liked football and supported PSG? Form 8 boys worked hard to perform their version of Cinderella this morning. The rehearsals were filled with laughter, French pronunciation techniques and Christmas Carol singing, in French.

We hope that everyone enjoyed the Play - we certainly enjoyed performing it! SL



Craft Day





CHRISTMAS 2021



CCCS CAROL COMPETITION

You have until the first day of Hilary Term (6th January) to submit your own, original carol composition. You could write your own tune to existing words (a new version of 'Silent Night' perhaps?), compose a tune to accompany a favourite poem, or even invent your own text as well as your own tune.

I will be delighted to accept submissions created on Flat, on Sibelius, sent by email to biddell.s@cccs.org.uk, or even written on manuscript paper and placed directly into my hands...

Good luck, and have fun!

SB





Christ Church Cathedral School

Please Join Us For

Christmas Punch Party

SATURDAY

11th December

Entry through the school gates (Brewer Street)

From 11.30 AM - 2 PM



Drinks Stalls
Tombola Food
And lots of fun

We are looking forward to seeing you there!

The more the merrier!



CCCSPA Meet and Greet

Introducing this week's Meet and Greet. It is important to mention that Annie and the family joined the School just before a lockdown, so they took on a bigger wave than one would have wished for.

Annie Brooke, Parent of: Matthew - Form 7

What did you want to be when you grew up and what are you doing now? I wanted to train horses. I actually am a nursery school teacher.

If you could travel anywhere in the world tomorrow, where would you go and why? I would head back to Thailand. I haven't been back since 2000 and it's where I met my husband, so a pretty special place.

Who is your idol and why? I have always wanted to be like my Nanny. She was kind to everyone, loved to cook for people, and was generally just the best grandma.

Favourite city or town and in which season? I love Christmas time in Oxford - it's magical!

One thing you would change in the world if you could? That everyone would have access to the medical care they need.

What is your favourite book? *Ender's Game* by Orson Scott Card.

Is there a family trait/habit that you have? We nearly always have homemade pizza on a Friday night!

If you could start something new (hobby/interest or sport) and were not limited with time/age/money, what would it be? I would have a farm with loads of horses and fulfil that little girl's dream of training horses!

Any advice on how to relax at the weekend? I usually get in the kitchen and bake something to relax.

Annie is immediately, and unashamedly, the person I would probably wish I could be more influenced by. Horses, baking, homemade pizza! Stop Annie, you're not only going to be the best Grandma we all wish we had, we all want to ride bareback now in Thailand, whilst eating home-made fairy cakes... I am feeling relaxed just thinking about it, I will picture this image when I am running to school for the 3rd time having forgotten something, possibly because I'll have been daydreaming. It is a vicious circle.

Annie, your love of horses reminds me of a few special people we have at school, so maybe we could organise a large pony camp get-together, of horse know-how, for the children. We do Bikeability, and if you can muster up the courage to comb a horse's back legs, it is no wonder you can deal with little children - all involving, bravery, empathy and courage. I always get nervous around horses, and they sense it and stand on my foot or knock me sideways. I can't help but think of the lyrics of this song when I read about you - "When I'm stuck a with day that's gray and lonely, I just stick out my chin and grin, and say, oh, The sun'll come out tomorrow, So you gotta hang on 'til tomorrow, Come what may". Thank you Annie and we look forward to meeting you in person.

Have a great weekend,

Kathryn
PA